

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Darren Rogers
Senior Director, Communications & Media Services
Churchill Downs Racetrack
(502) 636-4461 (office)
(502) 345-1030 (mobile)
Darren.Rogers@KyDerby.com

VOLATILE NEARLY BREAKS TRACK RECORD IN EIGHT-LENGTH ARISTIDES ROMP

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, June 6, 2020) – **Volatile** stamped himself as one of America's top sprinters while clocking six furlongs in 1:07.57 – just two one-hundredths of a second off the 13-year-old track record – with an eight-length demolition job over **Honest Mischief** in Saturday's 32nd running of the \$100,000 Aristides presented by Woodford Reserve (Listed) at Churchill Downs.

Ridden by **Ricardo Santana Jr.**, Volatile tracked early pacesetter **Bobby's Wicked One** from third on the outside in the compact field of six older horses. After a quarter-mile in :21.48, **Seven Nation Army** grabbed a short-lived lead around the turn while clocking the half-mile in :44.36. Volatile loomed boldly at the top of the stretch and when Santana dropped his hands and slipped the 4-year-old colt some reigns, he took off quickly with an explosive turn of foot and drew off under a hand ride to the wire.

Volatile eclipsed **Kelly's Landing**'s 2005 stakes record of 1:07.59 but just missed **Indian Chant**'s track record of 1:07.55 set on July 8, 2007.

“This horse has incredible talent,” Santana said. “To go that fast as he did today shows he is extremely talented. He did that so easily.”

The victory put Hall of Fame trainer **Steve Asmussen** one win back of **Dale Romans**, 737 wins to 736, for the all-time win milestone by a trainer at Churchill Downs. It was Asmussen's record fourth Aristides win after previously landing victories with **Mountain General** (2003), **Riley Tucker** (2010) and **Rothko** (2012).

“He is a tremendous talent,” Asmussen said. “His family means a lot to me with his second dam **Lady Tak**, who we trained and won the Test. We're hoping this horse shows the same kind of affinity toward races like that as she did. It wasn't a graded stakes but it was still a stakes win.”

Volatile earned \$61,380 for his owners **Phoenix Thoroughbreds III Ltd.** (Aamer Abdulaziz Ahmed) and **Three Chimneys Farm LLC** (Goncalo Torrealba). He improved his record to four wins in five starts with earnings of \$203,540. His previous victory was a 7 1/2-length romp in a six-furlong allowance affair at Oaklawn Park on April 24.

Volatile paid \$3, \$2.40 and \$2.10 as the odds-on 3-2 favorite.

Honest Mischief, ridden by **Tyler Gaffalione**, paid \$3.60 and \$2.40. **Manny Wah** closed to finish three-quarters of a length back of the runner-up under **Corey Lanerie** and paid \$2.60 to show. **Seven Nation Army**, **Heartwood** and **Bobby's Wicked One** completed the order of finish.

Volatile is a gray or roan son of **Violence** out the **Unbridled's Song** mare **Melody Lady**. He was bred in Kentucky by **Hill 'n' Dale Equine Holdings Inc.** and **Stretch Run Ventures LLC**.

The Aristides is named in honor of the inaugural Kentucky Derby winner of 1875.

FOUR GRACES DAZZLES IN GRADE III DOGWOOD

Whitham Thoroughbreds LLC's 3-year-old homebred filly **Four Graces**, a half-sister to multiple graded stakes winner **McCraken**, led every step of the way and turned back a challenge from **Edgeway** in the stretch to win Saturday's 45th running of the \$100,000 Dogwood presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade III) by 2 1/2 lengths.

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Ridden by **Julien Leparoux** and trained by **Ian Wilkes**, Four Graces ran seven furlongs over a fast track in 1:22.28, which was the second-fastest Dogwood in history, only behind eventual Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint winner **Covfefe**'s 1:20.51 last September.

“She’s a very classy filly and takes after all of her siblings,” Leparoux said.

Four Graces, who made her stakes debut, banked \$60,140 and 20 points on the Road to the Kentucky Oaks. By sprinter stallion Majesticperfection out of the productive Seeking the Gold mare Ivory Empress, Wilkes may opt to keep Four Graces around one turn and target a race like the \$100,000 Beaumont (GIII) over seven furlongs at Keeneland on July 10 (which also offers Top 4 points of 20-8-4-2 on the extended road to the Sept. 4 Longines Kentucky Oaks).

“This entire family is extremely talented so it was very rewarding to get her a stakes win today,” Wilkes said.

Breaking from post position No. 2 in the field of eight 3-year-old fillies, Four Graces set a contested pace from the inside through fractions of :22.27 and :44.84. Early on, four others – **Ain’t No Elmers**, **Magic Dance**, **Lady Glamour** and **Edgeway** – pressed her down the backstretch. Off the turn, Four Graces widened her lead and repelled a challenge from 8-5 favorite **Edgeway**.

“I thought she was going to have to go faster to get the lead but it ended up working out for us with the early pace scenario,” Wilkes said. “We had no other choice but to show speed because of her post on the inside. I felt really confident when she came off the turn and Julien started asking her to run and she put away (Edgeway) on her outside. There were some very nice fillies in this race that she beat.”

Four Graces improved her record to three wins in four starts with total earnings of \$134,450.

Sent off as the 2-1 second betting choice, Four Graces paid \$6.60, \$3.20 and \$2.60. **Edgeway**, ridden by **Tyler Baze**, returned \$3 and \$2.80. **Bayerness**, with **Florent Geroux** up, was another 5 ¾ lengths back of the runner-up in third and paid \$4.60 to show.

Lady Glamour, **Ain’t No Elmers**, **Clivetty**, **Magic Dance** and **Naughty Dance** completed the order of finish.

ODDS AND ENDS

Betting at Churchill Downs on Saturday totaled \$8,952,008. Racing on Sunday will feature a 10-race card at 1 p.m. (all times Eastern). The program will include a \$185,159 carryover in the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot on a Races 5-10. Racing from Churchill Downs on Sunday will air on **FS2** from 1-2 p.m., **FS1** from 2-6 p.m. and **FS2** from 6-6:30 p.m. as part of FOX Sports’ “America’s Day at the Races” coverage. It also will be broadcast on **MSG+** from 1-6:30 p.m.

ARISTIDES QUOTES

Ricardo Santana Jr., jockey of VOLATILE (winner): “This horse has incredible talent. To go that fast as he did today shows he is extremely talented. He did that so easily.”

Steve Asmussen, trainer of VOLATILE (winner): “He is a tremendous talent. His family means a lot to me with his second dam **Lady Tak**, who we trained won the Test. We’re hoping this horse shows the same kind of affinity toward races like that as she did. It wasn’t a graded stakes but it was still a stakes win.”

Whit Beckman, assistant trainer of HONEST MISCHIEF (runner-up): “We just got beat today. (Honest Mischief) ran a really good race but I don’t think anyone was beating the winner.”

DOGWOOD QUOTES

Julien Leparoux, jockey of FOUR GRACES (winner): “She sat back a little bit in the gate right before it sprung so she came out of there a little late. She moved real comfortably throughout the race and at the head of the lane when I asked her for her best run she responded right away. She’s a very classy filly and takes after all of her siblings.”

Ian Wilkes, trainer of FOUR GRACES (winner): “This entire family is extremely talented so it was very rewarding to get her a stakes win today. I thought she was going to have to go faster to get the lead but it ended up working out for us with the early pace scenario. We had no other choice but to show speed because of her post on the inside. I felt really confident when she came off the turn and Julien started asking her to run and she put away (Edgeway) on her outside. There were some very nice fillies in this race that she beat.”

Tyler Baze, jockey of EDGEWAY (runner-up): “We had a pretty unlucky trip with everyone showing speed to her inside. We were caught wide most of the trip.”

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